

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested on the basis of the following particulars.

1. In the Claims

The claims are currently amended to comply with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 were rejected on the basis of indefiniteness. In the amendment of the claims, the claims are amended to overcome this rejection.

More specifically, the claims are amended to recite that a lacquer or a thermoplastic material is used to close the screen opening of a mesh. Support for this amendment is found in the specification on page 12 and in claim 2 as originally filed.

In view of this amendment, withdrawal of this rejection of claims 1, 5, 8 and 9 is respectfully requested.

2. Rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,631,676 (Weichmann et al.)

This rejection is respectfully traversed on the basis that the Weichmann et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of the method for screen printing according to claim 1 and the apparatus according to claim 5. Claims 1 and 5 are thus patentable.

Claims 2-4 depend from claim 1 and are thus patentable based on their dependency from claim 1 and their individually recited features. Claim 6 depends from claim 5 and is thus patentable based on its dependency from claim 5 and its individually recited features. recited in claim 1 of the pending application.

It is well understood that anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is established only when a single prior art reference discloses, either expressly or under the principles of inherency, each and every element of the claimed invention. To establish anticipation, it must be shown that a single prior art reference describes each and every limitation of a claimed invention. The description in the reference may be either express or inherent.

In the following remarks, it will be pointed out that the Weichmann et al. reference is devoid of teaching a method for screen printing according to claim 1 of the pending application, or an apparatus for carrying out the method of claim 1 according to claim 5. Thus, the Weichmann et al. reference fails to teach each and every feature of the pending claims in the present application.

A glaring difference of the Weichmann et al. reference from the pending application is that the Weichmann et al. reference discloses a method of gravure printing whereas the pending application relates to screen printing. As is well understood by an ordinary skilled artisan, gravure printing and screen printing are not synonymous.

According to the method of Weichmann et al., depressions in a gravure blank form are uniformly filled with a thermoplastic liquefiable substance (col. 3, lines 53-56). An image is formed by thermal energy onto the gravure blank that carries the liquefiable substance (col. 3, lines 63-67; col. 4, lines 28-37). The gravure blank is then inked and the ink is transferred from the depressions forming the image to a printing stock by means of thermal energy (col. 3, line 67 - col. 4, line 3). The liquefiable substance is subsequently removed and the image on the gravure blank form is thus formed again (col. 4, lines 4-12).

The Weichmann et al. reference indicates at the onset of its disclosure that gravure refers to a printing process using printing elements that are depressed relative to the surface of substrate (col. 1, lines 21-24). Moreover, FIG. 2a of the

Weichmann et al. reference makes it abundantly clear that the depressions of the gravure blank form a plurality of webs 9 that are shown as being arranged to store ink or similar liquefiable substance. The webs have a predefined depth wherein the web has a border on all sides except for a side that is exposed outwardly from the gravure blank form.

Unlike the method of Weichmann et al., the method according to claim 1 does not pertain to gravure printing. To the contrary, the method of claim 1 relates to screen printing whereby ink is passed through screen openings and transferred onto a substrate. These screen openings do not store ink as do the webs of the gravure blank form of the Weichmann et al. reference, instead it is imperative that the screen openings are ink permeable for repeated printing operations.

In contradistinction to the Weichmann et al. reference, the method of claim 1 of the pending application has a plurality of openings that are reopened. According to the Weichmann et al. reference, the formed image on the gravure blank form comprises of regions of which the thermoplastic substance is burned off. There are simply no openings in the Weichmann et al. reference that are reopened, instead portions of the web are exposed to draw and store ink for the printing process.

It should be further pointed out that it is axiomatic that screen printing involves a "through printing" process wherein printing ink is pressed or transferred through screen openings. Unlike inks used for gravure printing, inks used in screen printing have a tendency to be more aqueous. This is yet another distinction that a skilled artisan would readily recognize from the teachings of the Weichmann et al. reference.

In view of these observations, it is submitted that the Weichmann et al. reference fails to disclose or suggest the data carrier according to the pending claims of the pending application. Withdrawal of this rejection is thus respectfully requested.

3. Conclusion

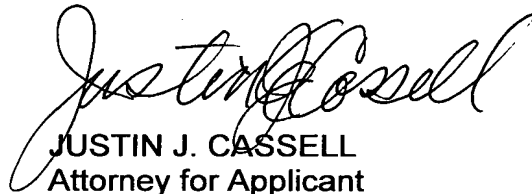
In view of the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that each and every pending claim in the present application be allowed and the application be passed to issue.

If any issues remain that may be resolved by a telephone or facsimile communication with the Applicant's Attorney, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the numbers shown below.

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Respectfully submitted,


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